nature net

The **Nature***Kenya* Newsletter

March 2001

Dear Member,

Perceptions

Too often I have heard the Society referred to as 'the bird organisation', not surprisingly as bird programmes ore very strong. There are the Wednesday Morning Birdwalks, the Pot Luck Outings, the Important Bird Areas programme, World Birdwatch, the Bird Hotline and lots of happy birders to be found at most outings and functions busy chatting about their latest sightings. But I have news for you! The start of several new committees and programmes (the Insect Committee, the Plant Committee, the Youth Committee and the Habitat Restoration Initiative for East Africa) is going to scatter the birders a little.

Already plant outings and talks have been organised and a live insect exhibit is being arranged with the Invertebrate Zoology Department of the Museum. So if you find your inspiration in plants or insects or wish to get involved in youth or restoration activities, here is your opportunity. Make sure you do not miss out on their functions, your support will make a difference!

Thankfully I don't hear the question 'what is Nature Kenya or the East Africa Natural History Society?' as often. We are quite oware of the amount of work that needs to be done to improve the general public's understanding of biodiversity, and the role that we play in conservation.

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REPORTING

UNEP GLOBAL YOUTH RETREAT "GREENFIRE" & the 21st session of UNEP Governing Council/ 2nd Global Ministerial Environment Forum

The participation of the Nature Kenya Youth Committee

UNEP Global Youth Retreat "Greenfire" 29 January to 5 February, 2001, Jadini Beach Hotel

"Bright and dedicated youth is a force capable of great change" (Klaus Topfer, Executive Director, UNEP)

Philip McOsano, representing the Nature Kenya Youth Ccommittee was able to attend two important meetings that took place in Kenya recently and reports.

"Greenfire" is a biennial event that provides an opportunity for 35 participants representing youth environment organisations across the globe to collectively discuss ways of working with United Nations Environment Programme and express their hopes for the future of our environment. Retreat participants become members of the UNEP Youth Advisory Council serving for a period of 2 years.

Four workshops were conducted by the United Nations and non-governmental organizations on the following topics;

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STOP PRESS!
FOREST EXCISIONS

The *Kenya Gazette* of 16 February 2001 establishes the National Environment Council under the Environment Monagement and Co-ordinotion Act, and names nine members to the Council.

In the same *Gazette* are fifteen Gazette Notices of forest excisions. Some of these notices affect forests which ore Important Bird (and biodiversity) Areas, including the Mau Complex, Mount Kenyo and South Nandi Forest.

Nature Kenya is supporting the Kenya Forests Working Group in making objections to these excisions, and urging decision-makers to conserve ond maintain forests for the essential services they provide to people and nature. *Please contact the office if you would like to be part of the campaign to conserve our forests.*

Action for Biodiversity Conservation

Box 44486, 00100 Nairobi. Tel: 749957 / 746090 Fax: 741049 E-mail: eanhs@africaonline.co.ke, www.naturekenya.org

CEROPEGIAS

Monday 12 March '01
5:30 p.m. FORD HALL
National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi,
(Refreshments prior & Town drop off)

Species of the genus Ceropegia in the Milkweed family (Asclepiadaceae) are herbs with bizzare flowers. In 1992 Phillip Archer published an illustrated account of Kenyan Ceropegias in his book *Kenya Ceropegia Scrapbook.*

Siro Masinde has cultivated Ceropegias, studied their taxonomy and has published many new species from eastern Africa. The talk will be an introduction to this aesthetically exciting but taxonomically difficult group of plants.

TALKS & VIDEOS

Ceropegia variegata

EXCURSIONS

KITENGELA OUTING

Saturday 24 March '01

Join us in Kitengela for a walk across the plains to look at insects and other creatures. We will visit the new KWS dams, constructed for the local community.

Bring a picnic lunch, water, hat and if possible binoculars and field guide and meet at the Museum car park at 8:00 a.m. or be at Kitengela Glass by 8:45 a.m.

SUCCULENTA EXCURSION TO GILGIL (Kibonde House)

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 March '01

Visit Astrid von Kalckstein's farm in Gilgil, for the day. You are also welcome to camp overnight. Meet at 10:00 a.m at the Gilgil Club. For more details look up the excursion in the Succulenta newsletter or call Christa at 582385

Trip to the Usambaras

Thursday 12 to Thursday 19 April '01

Trip participant's meeting at the Nature Kenya offices on Thursday 15 March '01 at noon.

Please ensure you are able to pay the full amount of the trip less deposit on this date.

PUBLICATIONS

Handbook of the Birds of the World
Volume 6 (Mousebirds to Hornbills)
Contributed by an international team of world experts, full of facts and more than 300 colour photographs.
Price: 145 Euros

Threatened Birds of the World
The only book to provide information on all 1,186 bird species threatened with global extinction.
Price: 115 Euros

You can order these books
By post: Lynx Editions, Passeig de Gracia, 12, E-08007 Barcelona, Spain
By fax: +34 93 302 1475
By Internet: www.hbw.com
By e-mail: lynx@hbw.com

Or send a self-addressed envelope to the Nature Kenya office for the Lynx price list and order form.

A copy of *The Threatened Birds of the World* is available in the Nature Kenya/ Museum Library for reference.

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* Developing income generating environmental projects
* Developing project proposals and fund raising for local environmental initiatives
* Reaching out to other youth groups through effective networking
* Running community driven environmental campaigns at little cost.

"Greenfire" participants gained new skills, shared experiences and expanded networks.

21st session of UNEP Governing Council/ 2nd Global Ministerial Environment Forum, 5 to 10 February '01, at the UNEP headquarters

This was a meeting of environment ministers from over 100 countries, as well as representatives of UN agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, business and industry.

At the opening ceremony, representatives of the UNEP Youth Advisory Council made a statement calling for implementation of policies, not mere meetings and negotiations, and emphasizing the link between poverty, over-consumption and the environment. The statement called on governments to cancel debts, impose green taxes on international trade, develop and utilize sustainable development indicators, create incentives, policies and measures to reduce consumption and finally called for the establishment of a trust fund for youth environmental activities.

The Youth delegates intensively lobbied their respective government delegations to put forward for adoption a plan, drafted at the Youth Retreat, for youth participation and funds for youth environmental programmes (especially in the developing countries). Success came towards the end of the session when this plan was submitted by the Government of Canada and the European Union and adopted by the general assembly.

The Nature Kenya youth committee will enlist in the UNEP youth network (which brings together over 1700 youth groups worldwide), and send a representative to the national youth steering committee for Earth Summit III (Rio + 10).

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

POT LUCK OUTINGS

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e. 18 March.** They decide where to go and what to do - usually observing birds and nature in general. Bring lunch.

TREE WALK

Arboretum guided Tree Walks on the last Monday of every month i.e. **26 March from 9:30 a.m.** Meet at the FONA offices beside the Girl Guides HQ. *Those who are not members of FONA pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

ARABUKO SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **3 March, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person.

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any for loss, injury, death or damage to property.

MARCH DIARY

Sat 3	Arabuko-Sokoke birdwalk
Mon 12	Talk on Ceropegia
Sat 17	FONA AGM
Sun 18	Pot Luck Outing
Sat 17 - Sun 18	Succulenta Outing
Sat 24	Kitengela Outing
Mon 26	Tree Walk
Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning	

Friends of Nairobi Arboretum AGM

Shelter Banda, Arboretum from 11:00 a.m. Saturday 17 March '01

Bird Hotline

Please note the records below are unconfirmed

Steel Blue Whydah, Irania, Lesser Kestrel, Temminck's Courser, Two-banded Courser, Black-chested Snake Eagle, Jacobin Cuckoo, Taita Fiscal, Eurosion Roller, *Olorgesailie/Feb* George Eshiamwato

Greater Frigotebird, *Casuarina Paint, Malindi/ Jan - Feb* **White-tailed Tropicbird,** *off share, Malindi/ Jan* **Eurasian Sparrowhawk,** *Gamba, Garsen/ Jan* **Short-toed Eagle,** *Tsava East National Park/ Feb* Colin Jackson ond others

Chestnut-headed Sporrow-Lark, Somali Golden-breasted Bunting, *Patterson's Safari Comp, Tsova Eost N.P,* **Fischer's Turaco, Green Barbet, Dark-backed Weaver, White-eared Barbet,** *Shimba Hills National Reserve/ Jan* Philip & Ros Hechle, Potrick & Karen Plumbe

African Darter, Red-knobbed Coot, Little Grebe, Common Greenshank and hundreds of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse *Barren water pan, about 10kms autside Wajir tawn/ Jan* Heother Elkins

Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo *Kieni Farest, / Jan* Eric Horric

1000+ White Storks, Abdim's Storks, 150 Marabou Storks, Black Storks, roost of 150 approx. Harriers (including Montagu's and Pallid), also large numbers of Wattled Starlings, Chestnut Weavers, Diederik Cuckoos and White-winged Widowbirds Lewa Downs / *Dec, Jan* Chris Thouless

Southern Pochord (one mole, four femoles) *Ol Jogi Game Reserve/ Jan* Tom DeMoor

Abyssinian Roller *Kilifi Plantatians/Jan* Benjie & Cloire Bowles

Denham's Bustard *Wheat fields near Maralal/ Dec* John, Lut & Andreos Fox

Please send details to *Kenya Birds*, c/o Nature Kenya

Remember to renew your membership!

We need your support!

Recruit **one** other member!

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We have a Development Subcommittee, which has started making real gains in tackling this problem.

The Dsc as we call it, has an institution/ university programme that provides guest speakers to tolk on an interesting topic in biodiversity and a Nature Kenya staff member to give an illustrated brief on our activities and programmes. If you think that the company or organisation you work for could benefit from this progromme pleose get in touch with us at the office and help dispel the myth that we are another of the Museum's collection of fossils.

Many believe that we are just happy pottering around in the bush after birds, dudus or succulents. While this is true to some extent, Nature Kenya has been making major steps in odvocacy at national and regional levels. We presented recommendations to the government on drafts of the Environment Management and Coordinotion Bill, the Forest Bills ond Forest policy. We held a seminar and workshop to raise awareness among key decision-makers, of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), on the importance of its ratification. Subsequently a cabinet memo on the AEWA was prepared and approved. Nature Kenya hod a very strong presence at the Convention on Biologicol Diversity, held at UNEP last year, and our Advocacy and Networking Monager took part os part of the Kenya Government delegation, illustrating that our commitment to biodiversity conservation is being recognised.

One perception that is not untrue is the key role of our members, who not only make us active through committees and projects but who give us the voice and constituency of environmentally concerned people. It is a very exciting time to be a member and a part of Nature Kenya as we go from strength to strength.

The promise of great things is very real.

Editor, **Catherine Ngarachu**

JOB & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Conservation Programe Officer

Nature Kenya seeks to recruit a Conservation Programme Officer, who will support the Executive Director and Conservation Programme Manager to develop ond implement an effective programme of conservation advocacy and action.

Main duties

• Provide supervision and technical support, to other conservation programme staff and volunteers • Assist to develop and implement Nature Kenya's conservation progromme according to the strategic plan • Work with the Conservation Programme Manager to develop a programme of conservation education, awareness and action at a key set of Important Biodiversity Areas • Assist to develop, source funds for and co-ordinate fieldwork for surveys at little-known IBAs • Help to develop and implement the monitoring programme for IBAs in Kenya • Assist, through technical support and co-ordination, with work to broaden the taxonomic scope of Nature Kenya's priority-setting • Help to organise, and provide technical input to, short training courses for volunteers, site-support groups and Government • Help prepare, implement and update an advocacy strategy for Nature Kenya • Support the operations of Nature Kenya's Policy and Legislation Working Group, and help to develop Nature Kenya's position and relevant policy issues • Assist to establish, maintain, develop and involve an active network of Nature Kenya members, conservation groups, Government and non-Government institutions (including District Development Committees and local authorities) around IBAs • Assist in producing material for the media to publicise Nature Kenya's conservation programmes • Assist in producing workplans, budgets, reports and project proposals to donor requirements

Qualifications: We are looking for an energetic, adaptable, enthusiastic, responsible and well-organised Kenyan citizen, with: • at least a first degree in a biological/environmental field (an MSc preferred) • at least two years relevant work experience (experience in community conservation would be an advantage) • a good understanding of conservation issues in Kenya • a sound working knowledge of computer applications • the willingness to travel and to work long hours at times • good inter-personal, written and verbal communication skills • a clear and demonstrable commitment to conservation

Applications including a current CV, e-mail and daytime telephone contact and contact details of two referees (including telephone/fax and e-mail) should be sent to the Executive Director, Nature Kenya, to arrive not later than 9 March 2001.

Fundamentals of Ornithology Course
Few places remaining (details in the February Nature Net)

Third Tropical African Bryology and Lichenology Training Course
– 9 July to 21 July 2001

Lectures are planned to show the various aspects of Tropical African bryology and lichenology: a survey of current status of bryological and lichenological exploration in tropical Africa; biology, ecology and classification of tropical mosses, liverwort and lichens, techniques of field collection and research; identification and management of a cryptogamic herbarium; importance and conservation of tropical cryptogamicbiodiversity.

Applications: Applicants should have a first degree in a botanical discipline and be scientists at the start of their research careers • applications must be in English or French and must include • a covering letter to explain why the applicant wishes to attend the course • a curriculum vitae giving details of academic and non-academic career, achievements and interests • confidential references from two academic referees • all applicants must arrange to have references sent directly to the organising committee as soon as possible and • an e-mail address for correspondence.

Organised by the Department of Botany, University of Nairobi. Registration $US 300 - registration far local Kenyan institution participants Ksh 8000. Fees includes field trip, training course handouts, teaching materials, lunches and teas. Limited scholarships available for suitable non-Kenyan African participants.

The Organizing Committee, 3rd Tropical African Bryology and Lichenology Training Course, Department of Botany,University of Nairobi,Box 14576, Nairobi, Kenya. e-mail: Petiot@wananchi.com fax: 254 2 449845

AOU MEMBERSHIP GRANTS
NOW AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS

The Council of the American Ornithologists' Union hos voted, to provide several hundred grants in the form of a three year AOU membership to qualifying undergraduate or graduate students interested in pursuing a career in ornithology.

To qualify students must: Have no current or prior membership in the AOU, send a letter of interest and a 2-3 page CV, and provide a one-page letter of sponsorship from an academic advisor on letterhead from the institution in which the student is currently enrolled.

Along with a brief outline of ornithological interest and professional goals, letters of interest should clearly specify the degree program in which the student is registered, his/her expected date of completion, and the advisor's name and email address. Membership grants will provide full membership in the AOU (including subscription to *The Auk*) for three consecutive years, and are not renewable.

Mail all materials together to Dr. Susan Haig, AOU Membership Committee, USGS/FRESC, 3200 SW Jefferson Way, Corvallis, OR, 97331, USA